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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/089,099	06/05/2002	Sylvain Deutsch	221111USOPCT	4480
22850	7590	03/10/2005	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			LISH, PETER J	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		1754		

DATE MAILED: 03/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/089,099	DEUTSCH ET AL.	
	Examiner Peter J Lish	Art Unit 1754	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 July 2002.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 14 and 15 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-3, 6, and 8-12 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 4,5,7, and 13 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/22/02.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ .

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: ____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 9 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 9 states that the hot reaction and the sintering occur at the same time within a temperature range of 1000-1800 °C. However claim 8, to which claim 9 depends, states that the hot reaction occurs within a temperature range of 800-1500 °C. The temperature ranges do not agree (i.e. heating to 1700 °C would meet the limitations of claim 9 but not of claim 8).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-3, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Horie et al. (US 5,082,603).

Horie et al. teaches a process for forming a solidified matrix containing boron and radioactive waste. The process involves heat treating high level radioactive waste to evaporate

water and nitric acid, thereby leaving a solid waste residue. The waste is then mixed with a boron compound such as boron carbide, which is known to have a rhombohedral structure, and heated at between 1000 and 2000 °C to melt. Various additives, such as rare earth or alkali metals may be added to the mixture before heat treatment. The melt is solidified to yield an alloy layer comprising waste that is alloyed to the boron and a residual oxide layer comprising waste in oxide form dispersed in a boron matrix. No difference is seen between the matrix of Horie et al. and that of the instantly claimed invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 8, 10, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Horie et al.

Horie et al. is applied above. Horie et al. does not explicitly teach that the waste and the boron compound are in powder form, however, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of invention to use powders of both the waste and boron compound, in order to ensure uniform mixing and efficient reaction between the waste and boron solids.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 9 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The prior art neither teaches, nor suggests, the formation of a matrix containing radioactive waste dispersed in oxide form in a rhombohedral crystalline structure of either B₃Si or B₆O.

Claims 4, 5, 7, and 13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 14-15 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The prior art neither teaches, nor suggests, the formation of a matrix containing radioactive waste dispersed in oxide form in a rhombohedral crystalline structure of either B₃Si or B₆O. Furthermore, the prior art neither teaches, nor suggests, a process consisting of mixing a powder of radioactive waste with a boron powder, heating to react, and sintering by heating under a pressure of between 30 and 200 MPa.

It is noted that the applicant's claimed matrix (and process of making) comprising "a crystalline boron compound of rhombohedral structure" does not include borosilicate glass, containing B₂O₃, which is a known matrix materials for radioactive waste storage.

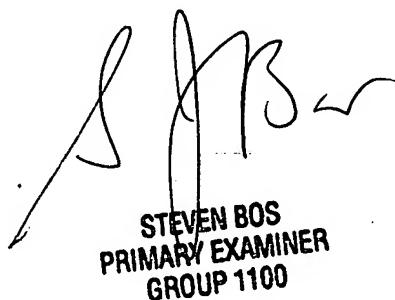
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peter J Lish whose telephone number is 571-272-1354. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:00-6:00 Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stanley Silverman can be reached on 571-272-1358. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

PL



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